

Development and evaluation of a diet and exercise intervention for promoting better sleep, health, and wellbeing within the UK Home Office police forces

Background:

Policing is a professional group that is plagued by sleep restriction, fatigue, and long-term health and wellbeing problems - in part because of working extended shifts that do not always align with the human body's biological drive to sleep at night and be awake during the day. As shift work (including night shifts) are an unavoidable reality in policing, strategies to adapt to and minimize negative health consequences are critical. The health benefits of diet and exercise are extensive and universally acknowledged, however benefits also show promise at contributing directly to sleep health and fatigue management for shift workers.

Program design and delivery:

The study will take baseline measurements from several forces, including surveys to assess sleep, health, and wellbeing. Forces will then receive the diet and exercise program, which will last for one month, and provide officers with recommendations on what to eat and when, and how to exercise and when. Members will be given variety to choose from rather than a recipe of exactly what to eat and how to exercise. Exercise bouts will be no longer than 20 minutes, and not require specialized equipment. Nor will meal plans be expensive or time consuming to prepare. During the program, participants will be asked to keep a food, exercise, and sleep diary. After the program, follow-up measurements will be taken from participants to evaluate the effectiveness of the program.

Potential burden and benefits:

The main burden associated with the study is the time commitment, which will include about 20 minutes before and after the program to fill out surveys, as well as approximately 10-20 minutes per day during the program for exercise and 5-10 minutes per day to fill in food, exercise, and sleep diaries. The main benefit associated with the study is improved sleep, health, and wellbeing for members.

Contact:

For more information about the program or what is involved in participating in the study, please reach out to Lois James lois_james@wsu.edu or Yvonne Taylor Yvonne.Taylor@college.police.uk



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